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THE GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN LECTURESHIP
IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS

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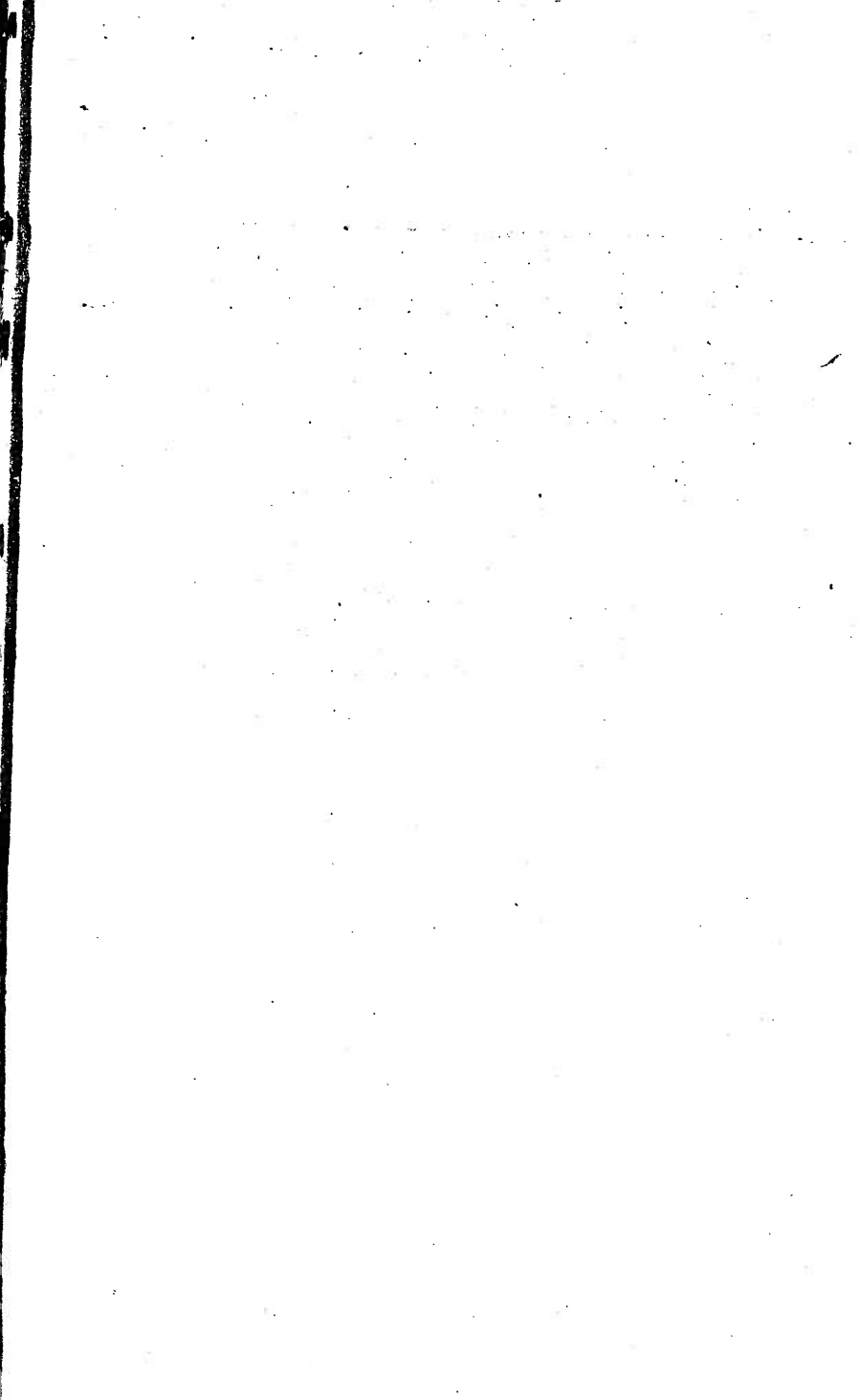
THE ETHICAL
TEACHINGS OF JESUS

BY

LYMAN ABBOTT, D.D., LL.D.



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"The ethical teachings of Jesus."

The George Dana Boardman Lectureship in Christian Ethics

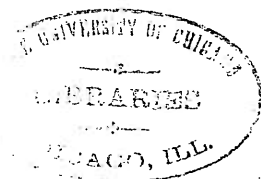
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THE FOUNDATION.



ON June 6, 1899, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania accepted from the Rev. George Dana Boardman, D.D., LL.D., and his wife a Deed of Gift, providing for a foundation to be known as "The Boardman Lectureship in Christian Ethics," the income of the fund to be expended solely for the purposes of the Trust. Dr. Boardman served the University for twenty-three years as Trustee, for a time as Chaplain, and often as Ethical Lecturer. After provision for refunding out of the said income, any depreciation which might occur in the capital sum, the remainder is to be expended in procuring the delivery in each year at the University of Pennsylvania, of one or more lectures on Christian Ethics from the standpoint of the life, example and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the publication in book form, of the said lecture or lectures within four months of the completion of their

delivery. The volume in which they are printed shall always have in its forefront a printed statement of the history, the outline and terms of the Foundation.

On July 6, 1899, a Standing Committee on "The Boardman Lectureship in Christian Ethics" was constituted, to which shall be committed the nominations of the lecturers and the publications of the lectures in accordance with the Trust.

On February 6, 1900, on recommendation of this committee, the Rev. George Dana Boardman, D.D., LL.D., was appointed Lecturer on Christian Ethics on the Boardman Foundation for the current year.

THE OUTLINE.

I. THE PURPOSE.

FIRST, the purpose is not to trace the history of the various ethical theories; this is already admirably done in our own noble University. Nor is it the purpose to teach theology, whether natural, Biblical, or ecclesiastical. But the purpose of this Lecture-ship is to teach *Christian Ethics*; that is to say, the practical application of the precepts and behavior of JESUS CHRIST to everyday life.

And this is the greatest of the sciences. It is a great thing to know astronomy; for it is the science of mighty orbs, stupendous distances, majestic adjustments in time and space. It is a great thing to know biology; for it is the science of living organisms—of starting, growth, health, movements, life itself. It is a great thing to know law; for it is the science of legislation, government, equity, civilization. It is a great thing to know philosophy; for it is the

science of men and things. It is a great thing to know theology; for it is the science of God. But what avails it to know everything in space from atom to star, everything in time from protoplasm to Deity, if we do not know how to manage ourselves amid the complex, delicate, ever-varying duties of daily life? What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world—the world geographical, commercial, political, intellectual, and after all lose his own soul? What can a University give in exchange for a Christlike character? Thus it is that ethics is the science of sciences. Very significant is the motto of our own noble University—“*Literæ Sine Moribus Vanæ.*”

And Jesus of Nazareth is the supreme ethical authority. When we come to receive from him our final awards, he will not ask, “What was your theory of atoms? What did you think about evolution? What was your doctrine of atonement? What was your mode of baptism?” But he will ask, “What did you do with Me? Did you accept Me as your personal standard of character? Were you a practical

everyday Christian?" Christian Ethics will be the judgment test.

In sum, the purpose of this Lectureship in Christian Ethics is to build up human character after the model of Jesus Christ's.

II. RANGE OF THE LECTURESHIP.

Secondly, the Range of the Lectureship. This range should be as wide as human society itself. The following is offered in way of general outline and suggestive hints, each hint being of course but a specific or technical illustration growing out of some vaster underlying Principle.

1. *Man's Heart-Nature*.—And, first, man's religious nature. For example: *Christian* (not merely ethical) precepts concerning man's capacity for religion; worship; communion; divineness; immortality; duty of religious observances; the Beatitudes; in brief, Manliness in Christ.

2. *Man's Mind-Nature*.—Secondly, man's intellect-nature. For example: *Christian* precepts concerning reason; imagination; inven-

tion; æsthetics; language, whether spoken, written, sung, builded, painted, chiseled, acted, etc.

3. *Man's Society-Nature*. — Thirdly, man's society-nature. For example:

(a) *Christian* precepts concerning the personal life; for instance: conscientiousness, honesty, truthfulness, charity, chastity, courage, independence, chivalry, patience, altruism, etc.

(b) *Christian* precepts concerning the family life; for instance: marriage; divorce; duties of husbands, wives, parents, children, kindred, servants; place of woman, etc.

(c) *Christian* precepts concerning the business life; for instance: rights of labor; rights of capital; right of pecuniary independence; living within means; life insurance; keeping morally accurate accounts; endorsing; borrowing; prompt liquidation; sacredness of trust-funds, personal and corporate; individual moral responsibility of directors and officers; trust-combinations; strikes; boycotting; limits of speculation; profiting by ambiguities; single tax; nationalization of property, etc.

(d) *Christian* precepts concerning the civic life; for instance: responsibilities of citizenship; elective franchise; obligations of office; class-legislation; legal oaths; custom-house conscience; sumptuary laws; public institutions, whether educational, ameliorative, or reformatory; function of money; standard of money; public credit; civic reforms; caucuses, etc.

(e) *Christian* precepts concerning the international life; for instance: treaties; diplomacy; war; arbitration; disarmament; tariff; reciprocity; mankind, etc.

(f) *Christian* precepts concerning the ecclesiastical life; for instance: sectarianism; comity in mission fields; co-operation; unification of Christendom, etc.

(g) *Christian* precepts concerning the academic life; for instance: literary and scientific ideals; professional standards of morality; function of the press; copyrights; obligations of scholarship, etc.

In sum, *Christian* precepts concerning the tremendous problems of sociology, present and future.

Not that all the lecturers must agree at every point; often there are genuine cases of conscience, or reasonable doubt, in which a good deal can be justly said on both sides. The supreme point is this: Whatever the topic may be, the lecturer must discuss it conscientiously, in light of Christ's own teachings and character; and so awaken the consciences of his listeners, making their moral sense more acute.

4. *Man's Body-Nature*.—Fourthly, man's body-nature. For example: *Christian* precepts concerning environment; heredity; health; cleanliness; temperance; self-control; athletics; public hygiene; tenement-houses; prophylactics; the five senses; treatment of animals, etc.

In sum, the range of topics for this Lectureship in Christian Ethics should include whatever tends to society-building, or perfectionation of personal character in Christ. Surely here is material enough, and this without any need of duplication, for centuries to come.

III. SPIRIT OF THE LECTURESHIP.

Thirdly, the Spirit of this Lectureship. Every lecture must be presented from the standpoint of Jesus Christ. It must be distinctly understood, and the founder of the Lectureship cannot emphasize the point too strongly, that every lecture in these successive courses must be unambiguously Christian; that is, from the viewpoint of the divine Son of Mary. This Lectureship must be something more than a lectureship in moral philosophy, or in church theology; it must be a lectureship in Christian morality, or practical ethics from the standpoint of Christ's own personal character, example, and teachings.

IV. QUALIFICATION OF THE LECTURER.

Fourthly, the Qualification for the lecturer. The founder hopes that the lecturer may often be, perhaps generally, a layman; for instance: a merchant, a banker, a lawyer, a statesman, a physician, a scientist, a professor, an artist, a craftsman; for Christian ethics is a matter of daily practical life rather than of metaphysical

theology. The founder cares not what the ecclesiastical connection of the lecturer may be; whether a Baptist or an Episcopalian, a Quaker or a Latinist; for Christian ethics as Christ's behavior is not a matter of ecclesiastical ordination or of sect. The only pivotal condition of the Lectureship in this particular is this: The lecturer himself must be unconditionally loyal to our only King, our Lord Jesus Christ; for Jesus Christ himself is the world's true, everlasting Ethics.

THE ETHICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS

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Address by Rev. Lyman Abbott, D.D., at University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 1, 1909, 4 P.M.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: In a peculiar sense it may be said of Dr. Geo. Dana Boardman that being dead he yet speaketh. Under this provision of his will he still continues his Christian ministry through the lips of others. It is a great privilege to be permitted to share with him in this work, to take it up and to carry it on, to speak on his behalf and in his place, and to share with you, his fellow citizens, in doing him honor in that which is, I think, the best way of doing any good man honor—by carrying on the work which he did in life and for which we honor him.

With Bishop Whitaker's definition of Dr. Boardman's view of Jesus Christ, as a Supreme Master, and of his teachings, as uttered with unique authority, I am in hearty accord; but

I am not here this afternoon either to eulogize the Teacher or to defend the teaching. My object is simply to interpret that teaching,—to try and tell you what it seems to me to be. Possibly, nay, probably, some of these interpretations will not seem correct to some of you. I shall exercise the American privilege of stating how they seem to me; and you will exercise the American privilege of disagreeing with me. At all events, I shall try simply to give my conception of the fundamental elements in that teaching, as illustrated by that life.

Scholars have made a very careful and microscopic examination of the four Gospels. We know from the preface to Luke's Gospel that he edited it out of pre-existing materials; and there is good reason to believe that the Gospels of Matthew and of Mark were prepared in a similar manner. I have no disesteem for the labors of those scholars who have endeavored to ascertain what are these pre-existing materials and how far, in these Gospels, we have the exact teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and how far they may have been modified or colored

by their reporters. But into those scholarly investigations I shall not enter this afternoon. I shall simply attempt to interpret to you the life and teachings of Jesus as we find them recorded in the four memorabilia of his life and instructions. In other words, what I shall try to do will be to interpret the life and teachings of Jesus as they were understood at the close of the first century by the Christian Church.

That understanding is embodied,
or at least indicated, by what
The most ancient creed in Christendom is the oldest creed in Christendom, a creed which is found in the Epistle to Titus: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

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we should think. This creed aims to state how we should live. "The grace of God hath appeared teaching us that we should *live*." And this creed is comprehensive. It covers the four relations in which man stands in this life: his relation to the material universe through his body; his relation to his fellow-man; his relation to God; and his relation to the future. What the author of this ancient creed thought was that Jesus Christ teaches us how we should live in this fourfold relation; and these are all the relations in which we stand and which our conduct can affect; for we cannot alter the past. Our duty to ourselves in our relation to the material world through our body is expressed by the word "soberly;" our duty to our fellow-men, and incidentally to the brute creation, is expressed by the word "righteously;" our duty to God is expressed by the word "godly," or devoutly, or piously; and our correct feeling respecting the future by the word "hopefully."

What, then, did Jesus teach respecting sobriety, righteousness, godliness, hope? In other words, what did Jesus teach respecting

our relations to the material world, to our fellow-men, to the Eternal, and to the future? You will not expect me in a single hour to give a complete and comprehensive interpretation of all these teachings which the Christian Church has been engaged in interpreting for many centuries. If, when I have finished, you shake your heads and say, "I think that was very imperfect," allow me to say, at the outset, I heartily agree with you; it will be very imperfect.

Christ pities the prosperous

In one striking passage Jesus has taught us that he does not think that either happiness or wealth or reputation or power is an end to be sought; and these four desires—the desire for pleasure, for wealth, for power, and for reputation—are four very dominating desires in human life. To clear the way for what I shall have to say, let me first put this negative teaching of Jesus:

Alas for you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Alas for you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Alas for you laughing ones! for ye shall mourn and weep. Alas for you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Here are four types of men whom we are apt to envy: the rich, the full, the merry, and the popular. And Christ pities all four.

He does not pity the rich because he is rich; but he pities the rich because he has received his consolation—because, that is, he has gotten that for which he has been striving. He does not pity the satisfied because he is contented with what he has: he pities him because he has no aspirations, no outreachings, because he is full, because he desires nothing more in the future; for aspiration is the secret of progress. He does not pity all that laugh, but the laughing ones, the merrymakers, the men and women that think that life is one huge jest, that never take anything seriously, that count "all the world a stage, and men and women only players." And he does not pity men who are thought well of; but he pities men when all men think well of them; because no man that has courage, vigor, forcefulness, and real and vital influence in making the world better than it is has all men thinking well of him. The desire for happiness, the

desire for wealth, the desire for rest or satisfaction, and the desire for popularity—Jesus disowned them all as legitimate ends of life. The men who made these desires their dominating motives were objects of Jesus' pity. Taking this statement as a clue, what did he teach respecting the world and the body? What respecting our relations to our fellow-men? What respecting our relations to God? What respecting our relations to the future?

Jesus Christ was not an ascetic. **Christ not an ascetic** He did not condemn the desire for pleasure. He did not renounce the world. He did not call on his disciples to renounce the world. He said of himself that he came eating and drinking; and that was so characteristic of him that men said of him that he was gluttonous and a wine-bibber. It is true that they lied; but you can tell a good deal about a man from the lies that people tell of him. They would not have told that kind of a lie of an ascetic. It was not that kind of a lie that they did tell of an ascetic—John the Baptist, who came neither eating nor drinking; the

lie they told about him was, that "he hath a devil." Jesus Christ accepted a great many invitations to feasts, and from all sorts of people: from reputable people and from disreputable people, from men and women of fine social position, and from men of no social position at all. Nor do the Gospels anywhere contain a record of his having ever declined any invitation to a social gathering. He compared himself to a man playing in the market-place that the children might dance to his playing. In the parable of the prodigal son he spoke of music and dancing with apparent approval. He began his ministry by creating wine to prolong the festivities of a wedding occasion; and as, in that Oriental age and time, the wedding festivities ordinarily lasted three or four days at the least, it would seem to an average Puritan that they hardly needed prolongation. He ended his ministry by bringing his disciples around a table and saying to them, I have desired greatly to have this last supper with you; and I want you to remember me in connection with the supper table. He wore a robe so precious that the soldiers

would not rend it, but cast lots for it. He did not think good dress or good food or harmless pleasure was wicked. He did not think the material world a bad world. He rejoiced in it. He loved the trees and the flowers and the birds and the clouds and the mountains and the lakes. So far as he had any hours of rest and recreation, they were spent either on the mountain top or in a little sailboat on the Sea of Galilee.

But, on the other hand, no one,
Christ not an I think, has ever accused Jesus
epicure

Christ of being an epicure.
He did not live for good things. He did not care much about good things. He was born in a manger; he spent the earlier years of his life in a peasant cottage; when he began his ministry, and from that time onward, he was without a home. To a disciple desirous to follow him, he said, I have not a place wherein to lay my head. He was invited at one time to a friend's house; the housekeeper was busy getting a great supper for him, and she asked him to send her sister to help her. In reply he made it very

clear that he did not care about a great supper. He cared a great deal more about a sympathetic listener than he did about an overloaded table. We have one incident in the Gospel narratives which shows what his ordinary food was. He had been preaching all day; the sun was beginning to sink behind the western hills; the time had come to dismiss the assembly. But Jesus, it is said, had compassion on the multitude, and was unwilling to send them away fasting lest they faint by the way; for many of them were a long distance from their homes. To provide them with food he asked the disciples what they had. Seven barley loaves, somewhat resembling our sea biscuit, and two little fishes, caught from the Sea of Galilee, corresponding to our sardines. Such was apparently his ordinary food—that of the poorer peasant class. Jesus did not, on the one hand, treat material things as the source of evil, nor the animal appetites and passions as sinful; nor did he, on the other, yield himself to the animal appetites and passions, or make them the source of his happiness.

Jesus Christ did not draw lines;
“Where shall we he did not say all things are
draw the line?” wicked; nor did he draw a line

and say, The things on oneside
of this line are wicked, and the things on the
other side of this line are right. He did not
prescribe rules for the regulation of conduct.
Rules are temporary; principles are eternal.
Christ formulated no rules; he interpreted prin-
ciples. Sobriety is not conformity to rules;
it is a principle of conduct, and even more a
spirit of life. A few years ago some stir was
made in this country by a now forgotten little
book bearing some such title as “What Jesus
Christ Would Do if He Came to Chicago.” I
do not know what Jesus Christ would do if he
came to Philadelphia. I heard the other day
that a college evangelist told the students that if
Jesus Christ were in college he would be captain
of a football team. I do not know whether he
would be the captain of a football team or not.
But I am very sure that, if he were the captain
of a football team, the man on the team who
tried to win success by foul play would get a

rebuke he would remember all the days of his life. And I am sure that if he came to Chicago or New York or Philadelphia, the men that are corrupting our great cities would be branded with a hot iron and would carry the brand with them for the rest of their lives. My total abstinence friend is very sure that Jesus Christ would be a total abstainer if he were in America; my friend who makes a moderate use of wine and beer is sure he would not be a total abstainer if he were in America. I do not undertake to say whether he would be a total abstainer or not; but I am very sure that he would not confound total abstinence and temperance. He would not think that total abstinence from alcoholic beverages is the same as the virtue of self-control. He would not preach such a doctrine of temperance that a man who eats pie until his flesh is as soft as pastry and drinks coffee until his color is as yellow as coffee could call himself a temperance man because he did not drink beer.

The minister is continually asked to-day, "Where shall I draw the line?" And the answer of Jesus Christ, I think, would be, There

are no lines. He would not teach that knocking balls around on a green lawn is right because that is croquet, and knocking balls around on a green table is wrong because that is billiards. He would not teach that cards are right if you have historical names on them, and wrong if you have spades and hearts on them. He would not teach that it is right to have a tableau or a charade in a church sociable, and wrong to see a play given by professionals in a theater. He would not teach that it is wrong to wear precious jewels and right to wear precious flowers. He would teach this: No enjoyment is right that does not help to develop manhood and womanhood; and no enjoyment is wrong that does help to develop manhood and womanhood. What is luxury? A comfort that enervates. What is comfort? A luxury that does not enervate. The life is more than meat; the body is more than raiment. Personality is more than things. All things are right if they are contributing to character; all things are wrong if they are not contributing to character. That was the essence of Christ's teaching concerning our relation to the

material world. Temperance is the control of the body by the spirit for ministry to the spirit. Nothing less than this deserves the name of temperance.

What did Jesus Christ teach about righteousness? What, **Accumulating wealth Jesus does not condemn** that is, did he teach about our relations to our fellow-men?

We have seen that he did not condemn the desire for pleasure. Neither did he condemn the desire for acquisition. A Socialistic friend said to me the other day, "Do you know there are some people who really think that it is right to be rich!" Jesus Christ was one of the men who think that it is right to be rich. He did not condemn wealth. On the contrary, he approved of wealth; he approved of the accumulation of wealth, and he approved of the use of accumulated wealth to accumulate more wealth. He did this in a well-known parable. He told the story of a man who gathered his servants together and gave to one servant five talents, and to another servant two talents, and to another servant one talent, and left them

to manage the property. When he came back, the man who had the five talents had traded with the five and made five more talents, and Jesus commended him; and the servant who had the two talents had traded with the two and made four more talents, and Jesus commended him; and the third man, who had hid the lord's money in the earth believing that it is not right to make wealth, Jesus condemned as a slothful servant. I am aware that we have spiritualized this parable; and we have done well to spiritualize it. But the parable is none the less true without a spiritual interpretation; its direct and immediate meaning is true as well as its indirect and spiritual meaning. Jesus never condemned thrift or industry or the accumulation of property.

What Jesus did condemn was making the accumulation of property an end in life. Jesus very rarely used the language of contempt. I do not think that he ever called a man a fool but once. That was in a story he told of a certain rich man who had his barns full to overflowing and who said, "What shall I do? I have more property invested than I know what to do

with; where shall I invest what is coming in?" He said, "I know what I will do; I will build some more big barns"—I will get some more boxes in the safe deposit company, would be the American form—"and I will try and find a place for my overflowing wealth there." The end of the story I will give in the words of the Master: "God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

**Hoarding wealth
Jesus does
condemn**

To Jesus accumulation was not wrong. But to accumulate for the sake of accumulation was both sin and folly. It was making the man the servant of things, not things the servant of man. In interpreting the words of Jesus we need to be careful not to fall into the error into which some interpreters, both orthodox and radical, have fallen—that of interpreting them as though they were the words of a revised statute. In point of fact there are only six words of Jesus which we possess, the words addressed by him to the maiden whom he raised from the dead,

"Talitha cumi;" and the cry upon the cross "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!" These are Aramaic; Jesus taught in Aramaic. All the other words of Jesus we have translated into the Greek; and most of us have that Greek translated into English; that is to say, instead of having the very words of Jesus, we have the translation of a translation of his teaching. This of itself is a sufficient and conclusive reason why we should not literalize in our interpretation of the words of Jesus. But if we are going to literalize, let us literalize consistently and not inconsistently. My radical friend declares that the teachings of Jesus are not practicable, that we cannot carry them out in life, and that we do not pretend to do so. Jesus, he reminds us, said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" and Christians do universally lay up for themselves treasures upon earth; every man that owns a house and lot, or a share of stock in a corporation, or a life insurance policy, or money in a savings bank, has laid up for himself treasure upon earth. But Jesus did not say, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." He said,

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth *where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal.*” And no sensible person does. Moth and rust do not get at Mr. Rockefeller’s oil wells, nor at the Sugar Trust’s sugar, and thieves do not often break through and steal a railway or an insurance company or a savings bank.

What Jesus condemned was hoarding wealth; he never condemned possessing it or using it for the benefit of society. In the first century the rich man bought jewels with his money, put them in a pot and buried them in the earth, or he bought rich garments with his money and hung them in his house or displayed them on his person. Thieves and rust got at the buried treasure; moths at the closeted treasure. There are still a few ignorant, distrustful foreigners who tie up their money in a stocking and hide it in a trunk, where thieves break through and steal; and there are a few ignorant and extravagant society women who put their money in inartistic dresses made for display, which a change in fashions makes useless before the moths can get

at them. These exceptional perpetrators of folly may well take the counsel of Jesus to heart. But the great mass of American wealth is active; it is serving the community; it is building a railway to open a new country to settlement by the homeless; it is operating a railway to carry grain from the harvests of the West to the unfed millions of the East; it is extracting coal from the mines for warmth, and oil from the wells for light, and grain from the prairies for food, and steel and copper from the mountain-sides for instruments of toil. We do not lay up for ourselves treasures where moth and rust doth corrupt. We harness it and set it at work in innumerable forms of beneficial activity. Not having wealth and using it for the world's betterment, but hoarding it unused, Jesus condemned.

Oppression and neglect of the poor he condemns This hoarding of wealth, this acquisition and possession of it for its own sake, he condemns, because it inevitably carries with it, if not oppression of the poor, at least indifference to them and neglect of them. Nowhere in the literature of any

country will be found a more bitter invective than that which he pronounced against the men who devour widow's houses and for a pretense make long prayers. Outside the walls of Jerusalem, in the valley of Gehenna, a bonfire was always burning, on which the offal of the city was cast to be destroyed. "Serpents, race of vipers," he cried to these pious robbers of the poor, "how can ye escape the judgment of Gehenna?" You who pride yourselves on your social position and your orthodox religion are as the offal of the universe. How can you escape being cast out and destroyed?

But these are not the only rich men whom he denounced. He condemned not only the rich who oppressed the poor, but, in almost equally vigorous terms, the rich who neglected the poor. In orthodox Pharisaism was current a pictured underworld, afterwards more fully portrayed in mediæval literature, of a tormenting hell, to which were condemned the pagans for their worship of false gods. Twice Jesus used the picture to enforce a lesson very different from that of either Pharisaism or mediævalism.

Once he used it in a dramatic parable composed of two scenes. In the first scene a rich man was depicted, clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day, and wholly indifferent to the poor man who lay uncared for at his gate. Even the dogs had more compassion, and came to lick the poor man's sores. In the second scene both have died: the rich man is buried; the poor man is carried by angels to Abraham's bosom. And the rich man is seen in hell, not for worshiping false gods, not for oppressing the poor, not for being rich, but for being indifferent to the claims of humanity.

In the other teaching all nations are pictured by Jesus as gathered before the judgment throne of the Messiah. The awards of life are pronounced. And it is not the pagans who have worshiped false gods, nor the heretics who have believed false doctrine, nor the schismatics who have separated themselves from the Church, nor merely the cruel and tyrannical who have oppressed their fellow-men, but those who have done nothing to relieve the stranger, and the

naked, and the sick, and the imprisoned, who are condemned as accursed to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

The age of
humanity The anathemas of the Church
 have been leveled against the
 unbelievers in Christianity; the
 anathemas of Jesus are leveled
only against the practitioners of inhumanity.
But in his teaching neglect is no less an inhumanity than oppression. I cannot doubt that Jesus would esteem the age of hospitals and orphanages, of insane asylums and reformatories, of kindergartens and social settlements, more Christian than the age of creeds and catechisms and of religious conformity enforced by religious persecution. But my imagination is not equal to conceiving the commingled scorn and indignation with which the author of the parables of the Rich Fool and of Dives and Lazarus would address those men in America, however little or however great their wealth, whose whole ambition is to acquire and possess, and still to acquire and possess, who make wealth the standard of success and the dollar mark the

measure of manhood, and who never employ either their wealth or their ability in a serious endeavor to grapple with the great problem of poverty which still confronts our modern civilization.

The folly of a life of mere money-making And Jesus condemned acquisition for its own sake, not only because it wronged others, but also because it wronged the man who was making the acquisition. "What shall it profit a man," he said, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own life?" That does not mean, What shall it profit a man if he gets this world and loses another? There are a good many Americans to-day who think the other world is so uncertain that a world in the hand is worth two in the bush. That was not Jesus' question. His question is, What shall it profit a man if he loses himself and gets things? What profit to a man who can gather from the world all the choice foods that can be found in the world's markets and spread them out upon his table, if in the process he has gotten dyspepsia and cannot eat them? What profit

if he is able to buy pictures and hang them on his walls, and lacks either the taste or the time to look at them? What profit if he can store his house with royal books and cares for no books but his ledger and his journal? A man does not own a book because he has it in his house; he owns it when he can put it in his head. He does not own a picture because it hangs on his walls; he owns it when it can delight his heart. A man of wealth not long since built a country house in the neighborhood of one of our great cities. No country house is complete without a library. No library is complete without books. But the shelves in this library when it was finished were too shallow to hold books. So what does he do but buy of a publisher shop-worn copies in fine bindings of classical English works, cut the books in two, leaving the backs intact, glue them into the shelves, lock the glass doors, lose the key, put a great lounge against the bookcase—and behold his library! “What shall it profit a man if he gain the world and lose his own life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?”

Jesus did not
condemn desire
for power or all
use of force

Jesus did not condemn the desire for power; on the contrary, he indicated approval of it, because he offered it as a reward.

He said to his disciples, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That is power. In one of his parables he represented the lord in the story as saying to the loyal and efficient servant, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." That is power. He approved the desire of men for power, for he appealed to it as to a worthy motive.

Nor did he condemn all use of force. He did not draw any line between physical and moral power, and condemn the one and approve the other. He began his ministry by an act which had all the effect of using physical power; he ended it by another of a similar character.

The Temple at Jerusalem was built in a series of courts one within the other. The outermost of these courts was called the Court of the Gentiles, because no Gentile, under pain of death, could pass its portals into the court

within. Graft is not a modern invention, nor rings a modern creation. They existed in Palestine in the time of Jesus, and were not on so large a scale as in our time because Palestine was not so large as the United States. Worshipers coming up to Jerusalem had to exchange their foreign coin for the Hebrew coin in which alone the priest's charges could be paid, and had to purchase doves, sheep, and oxen for their sacrifices. A corrupt ring had been formed by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of Jerusalem; the Court of the Gentiles had been converted into a market-place; there the money-changers plied their trade; there the doves were caged and the sheep and cattle were stalled; and the clink of the coin and the cooing of the doves and the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle mingled with the echoes of the Temple music stealing out through the open doors. The priest could always find a reason for rejecting the money or the sacrifice offered by the worshiper if it had not been obtained in this Temple market-place. In short, there was a trust; and the profits from the extra charges

imposed by the monopoly were divided between the priests and the politicians. Jesus, coming up from his baptismal consécration to his ministry to Jerusalem, beheld this scene with indignation. He was as yet unfriended and unknown. It is doubtful whether he had any disciple with him, unless possibly John, to whose pen we are indebted for, I think, the most authentic narrative of this incident. Jesus stooped down, gathered from the Temple floor some of the rushes used to bed the cattle, wove them into a lash, and, advancing on the throng of frightened thieves, drove them without ceremony from their desecrating market-place. Take these things hence, he cried; ye have made out of the house of God a den of thieves. Afterward, when John, in a vision in the Isle of Patmos, saw a figure whose eyes were like a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass, and his voice like the sound of many waters, and his words cut like a two-edged sword, he recognized the leader whom he had seen that day in the Temple, with a countenance like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible.

The other act was at the end of Jesus' life. He had spent an evening in quiet conversation with his disciples. He had met with them about that ever-memorable supper-table, hinted to them of his approaching death, and endeavored to prepare them for the tragedy. Did he know just what form that tragedy would take? Or how soon it would be consummated? We cannot tell, for we have only the reports of disciples who evidently did not know then, but who interpreted his prophetic words by the almost immediately following events. But he knew that Judas had gone out to betray his present resting-place to his enemies. He arose from the table and bade his disciples follow him to a garden outside the city walls. It was apparently a familiar resort to them and to him. He had said his last word to them, and, withdrawing first from the eleven, then from his three most intimate friends, asked them to watch while he retreated into the shadow of the trees for prayer. Could he have escaped? Whither? He had few friends in Judea, and none that could afford him any refuge against the conspir-

acy for his death. And to have fled to Galilee, even could he have done so, would have been a confession of weakness and defeat after his challenge to the corrupt priesthood under the roof of the Temple which they considered their peculiar domain. But he did not wish to be taken unawares; wished at least one hour of quiet, uninterrupted communion with his Father before the day of horror dawned on him and his disciples. So he asked—his last request—his three friends to watch for him. But they could not or would not realize that so great a crisis was near. They did not watch; they slept. It was not they, it was he who heard the tramp of the police as they marched with measured step across the valley to seek him in the garden which Judas knew so well. The echoes of their foot-fall brought his Father's answer to his prayer; the cup could not pass from him unless he drank it. And he went forward to put himself between the arresting party and his disciples that he might save them by surrendering himself. Let John, an eye-witness of what followed, tell the story here. "Jesus therefore, knowing all things

that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." The hint was not lost on the disciples, who made good their escape, while Jesus was bound and led away. It is idle to ask whether it was natural or supernatural power, physical or moral power, that made the guard fall back and give the disciples an opportunity to escape. Is hypnotism physical or moral, or the two combined? It is enough that, in the expulsion of the traders in the beginning of his ministry and in the momentary repulse of the arresting guard to save his disciples from arrest at the end of his ministry, Jesus produced all the effect of physical power. He did, whether by natural or supernatural power it is idle to inquire and

perhaps impossible to judge, what, if he is an example, we have a right in similar circumstances to do by the exercise of such power as we possess, provided we are inspired by the same unselfish and chivalric spirit.

Nor did Jesus take the ground that has sometimes been taken in modern times, that physical force may be used in self-defense, but not otherwise. He never used it himself in self-defense; he rebuked Peter when Peter attempted to use it in his defense; and in one notable passage he apparently—again I say I would not lay too much stress on the seeming words of Jesus—he apparently condemned every kind of forcible resistance in self-defense. The passage is this:

Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

To smite you on the cheek is personal violence: do not resist that. To sue you at the law is to employ legal means of injustice: do not resist

that. To compel you to go a mile is governmental injustice: do not resist that. This is what Jesus seems to say. He does not forbid all use of force. And he does not draw the line at self-defense. What then? Jesus himself seems to me to give the answer to this question: "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." In effect Jesus said to his disciples: "I do not condemn the use of the world, but use it in service; I do not condemn the acquisition of wealth, but acquire it for service; I do not condemn the exercise of power, but exercise it for service."

But service was not, in Christ's
Godliness thought, to be indirect and incidental and occasional service, such as one man may furnish to his fellow-men as he goes through life. There was a unity to

Christ's life. If we wish to know the unity of that life, we must ask what he taught is our relation to God. What did he mean by Godliness?

There has been a great deal of theological discussion on the question, What was Christ's pre-existent relation to the Father and what is his post-resurrection relation to the Father? These are questions in speculative theology, and my subject this afternoon is not theological but ethical. I consider simply what he taught are our relations to the Father, and what light the teaching of his own relation to the Father in his earthly life throws on our life problems.

Jesus was not an agnostic. To him God was not the Unknown and Unknowable. Nor was he a deist. God was not an hypothesis to account for phenomena, a hypothetical Creator to explain the creation. He never argued the existence of a God, nor do his teachings contain any element out of which such an argument can be constructed. Nor was

Jesus was not
an agnostic,
deist, or
theologian

he a theologian. He did not present any philosophy about God, any analysis of God's character, any attempted catalogue of his attributes, nor even any definition of him. One looks in vain in his teaching for any such science of God as is attempted in the Westminster Shorter Catechism:

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

The nearest approach to this is his statement that God is spirit, and is to be spiritually worshiped.

Nor was the relation of Jesus to God that of a servant to a master or a subject to a king. He never calls himself the servant of God, he never calls God king, or sovereign, or the moral governor of the universe. He does not discuss the power or the sovereignty or the authority of God. Conclusions as to the sovereignty and authority of God may be deduced from his teaching; but they are incidental to that teaching, not the direct subject of it.

God man's
comrade

To him God was a companion, a comrade, a friend, a personal experience. He exhausted language in the endeavor to put before his disciples the intimacy of this relationship. He is my Father, he said; he always hears me; I know him and understand him; he knows me and understands me; we work together; what I do, I do by the grace of his companionship; what I say, I say by the grace of his inspiring; I am in him; he is in me; I and my Father are one. Out of these and kindred declarations theology has constructed a complicated theory of the personality of God. Whether that theory is correct or not I do not here consider. I am concerned to-day only with the earthly relation of Jesus to God and the teaching of Jesus concerning our earthly relation to God. And no reader of the Gospels can doubt, whatever his theology, that this relationship was, in the mind of Jesus, one of most intimate companionship.

Nor can it be doubted that he sought to give something of this companionship to his disciples.

He not only said, God is my Father, he told his disciples to call God "Our Father." In the one prayer of his for his disciples of which we have a report, he said, I have come, Father, that they may know thee; and I have made them to know thee; and thy utterance of thyself to me I have given to them; and I pray that as thou art in me and I in thee, that so they may be one in us. Jesus did not come to teach us about God, but to introduce us to God, to make us personally acquainted with him. It is one thing to give to a friend an analytical description of your father; it is quite another thing to bring your friend into your home and introduce him to your father. Jesus did not do the first; he did do the second.

The relationship which he sought to establish between his disciples and God was not that of an obedient subject to a great lawgiver; it was that of a loyal and loving son to a just and generous father. It was not that of mere obedience; it was that of spiritual loyalty. Two Germans come to America. They are equally obedient to its laws. But one means, as soon as he has

earned a little money, to go back to his fatherland; the other, enamored of American institutions and the American spirit, means at the earliest possible day to become an American citizen. One is a German living in America; the other is an American born in Germany. What Christ wished for his disciples was, not obedient foreigners, such as the first German, but loyal citizens of the kingdom of God.

Pharisaism is
obedience to law;
Christianity is
love and loyalty
to a Father

It was this that marked the difference between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching of the Pharisee. The Pharisees were not all hypocrites. It

would not be far wrong to call them the Puritans of the first century. To them God was a lawgiver, and righteousness was obedience to his laws. Some of the Pharisees—those of the more liberal school—laid emphasis on the moral laws of God as they were embodied in the two laws, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. Others insisted

on exact obedience to all the rules and regulations of the Levitical code and added to them an elaborate ceremonial ritual which they taught had been handed down from ancient days by oral tradition. But widely as they differed in this important respect, they agreed in regarding obedience to law as the essence of righteousness.

Jesus taught a different lesson. To Jesus God was not a lawgiver but a Father, and the crown of righteousness was not civic obedience to legal enactments, but sympathetic fellowship with, and spiritual loyalty to an adored Father. So he said very little about law; and very little about rewards for obedience and penalty for disobedience. One of his stories was told to illustrate this difference between his teaching and that of the Pharisees. The Pharisees, who counted themselves the servants of the Most High, thought that they were earning by their obedience to their king a seat at the king's table in the kingdom of God. Said Jesus to them: When your servant has finished his plowing or the feeding of your cattle and comes in from his work, do you ask him to sit down at

your table with you? Do you thank him because he has done the work he was hired to do? I think not. If you are only servants of the Most High, do not expect a reward; you have only done what was your duty to do.

To Jesus, law was not an end but a means. If obedience to the Sabbath law impeded a useful service to humanity, or involved the sacrifice of the life of even an ox or an ass, or even the discomfort of temporary hunger, it was to be set aside. Man was lord of the Sabbath because the Sabbath was made for man. Not to abstain from killing, but to abstain from unjustifiable anger; not to abstain from adultery, but to abstain from impure desire; not to abstain from profanity, but to be simple and sincere in heart—this is righteousness. The blessing is not on those who have obeyed either the ceremonial or the moral law, but on those who are filled with the spirit of a great and inspiring peace, who are pure in heart, who are full of mercy, who, knowing their imperfections, are inspired by aspirations for a better life. And when he was accused of setting aside the law by these

teachings, he replied: You do not understand. I am come not to destroy the law, nor yet to teach obedience to the law, but to arouse and inspire that life of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God which it was the object of law to promote. I am come to fulfill the law.

The most important theme in the teaching of Jesus, around which all his other teaching centered, was this, How can we come into this intimacy of companionship with God? And to that question his answer was, Not by studying philosophies about God, nor by devoting one's self to synagogue or Temple worship of God, nor even by obedience to the supposed law of God, but by working for God and with God to accomplish God's purposes in the history of the race. To have our own purpose to serve, our own ends to accomplish, our own will to achieve, and to desire God as a sleeping partner, who will not interfere needlessly with our methods, but will help us through any difficult crisis in our affairs—

The road to
fellowship with
God

that is false religion—common, but false. To see that God has a purpose to accomplish, a will to achieve, and to be eager to share with him, at whatever cost to ourselves, in accomplishing that purpose—that is true religion.

This was the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. He never asked the Father, Help me to accomplish my will; he asked the Father, Help me to accomplish thy will. This was the secret of his spiritual life: not merely dependence on his Father; not merely obedience—doing the will of the Father; not merely resignation—bearing without complaint the burdens laid on him by the will of his Father; but consecration—the identification of his will with the will of his Father. The supreme masterful wish of his life was to accomplish his Father's will. I have come to do the will of him that sent me; my meat is to do the will of him that sent me; my teaching is not mine but the teaching of him that sent me; the works that I do are his and bear witness to him that sent me; he that sent me has given me my commission and how am I straitened till it is accomplished: these are some

of the sentences scattered through his teaching that interpret his spirit. Self-will is not the strongest will. The strongest will is one devoted to a great mission and loyal to a great leader. Such was the will of Jesus; it was set to do his Father's will and accomplish his Father's purpose.

**Christ's life
passion**

The only story we have of his
boyhood indicates how early
in life this spirit pervaded him.

He went up with his parents in Passover week to Jerusalem; became separated from them; and after they had gone a day's journey from the city they returned to seek him, a boy twelve years of age. They found him, not gazing at the city sights, nor visiting the city shops, nor listening to the splendid, if barbaric, music of the Temple, nor fascinated by its gorgeous ritual. They found him in the one university of the Holy Land asking of the rabbis there the questions about the kingdom of God which his synagogue teachers could not answer. And he was naïvely surprised that they did not know where to find him. Where else could he be than where he

could take advantage of this one occasion of his life to learn something from the great men of his nation about his Father's business.

His whole life is absolutely dominated by this Spirit of consecration to Another's will. He begins his public ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, the village of his boyhood home, by a sermon in which he publicly dedicates himself to that service which his Father had appointed to him:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings
to the poor:
He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

To the work thus outlined he devotes his brief life without hasting, without resting, without deviation. If men are hungry, he feeds them; if ignorant, he teaches them; if in sorrow, he comforts them; if discouraged, he heartens them. He is equally ready to preach to admir-

ing crowds in Galilee and to execrating and tumultuous crowds in Jerusalem; to a congregation of thousands on the hillside, to a congregation of hundreds gathered upon the shore of the lake, to one lone outcast woman by the well. No man is too high or too intrenched for his rebuke, none too lowly, too despised, or too sinful for his sympathy. His Father's spirit is the secret of his patient love for his disciples, which even the treachery of Judas Iscariot cannot exhaust; it is the secret of his indignation against the profaners of the Temple who have turned his Father's house into a den of thieves. At last the tragic end draws nigh. Despite the remonstrance of his disciples, he marches up to Jerusalem, they following sorrowfully and perplexed after him. He escapes from the city to his accustomed retreat in a garden in the environs. His prayer there is not a prayer of resignation, but of dedication. His request is not denied, but granted. For his request is, *Not my will, but thine be done*. For answer, the cup of anguish which Judas Iscariot, the apostate disciple, Caiaphas, the recreant

priest, and Pilate, the coward governor, hand to him, is to him the cup which his Father gives to him, and he takes it without shrinking. Only once in that last terrible hour does his spirit seem to fail; it is when, in the darkness, it seems to him as though, after all, he had somehow failed of his Father's purpose, and he cries out with the cry of an orphan, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And then the great peace that comes with the consciousness of his Father's will fulfilled, descends upon him, and his life ends with the triumphant cry of triumph, It is finished, and he escapes from the malice of his enemies to the refuge of his Father, with the words, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

Godliness is more than correct belief about God, more than obedience to God's law; more than trust in God's protecting care. It is the consecration of one's life and all its energies to the accomplishment of God's will in the world in a spirit of joyous, loyal companionship with him.

What is God's will? What is he seeking to

accomplish in the world? What was Jesus seeking to accomplish? What did he commission his disciples to accomplish for the future? In other words, what was to him that "blessed hope" to which he looked, and which he put before his followers as their motive to action and inspiration to life?

The hope of
Jesus

Jesus assumed that the men to whom he addressed himself were children of God and shared their Father's immortality. He spoke to them as immortals; not as machines, not as a mere higher type of animals. But he said very little about a celestial life hereafter. In one parable he described Lazarus as in Abraham's bosom, using a common figure of his time. In his picture of the Judgment Day he portrayed those who had given themselves to the service of their less fortunate brethren as inheriting a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. In his last words to his disciples he comforted them with the assurance that this world is not God's only world; that there are other dwelling-places; and that he was going to prepare a place

for his followers. On the cross he promised the repentant brigand, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." But he furnished no picture of a future celestial existence. Our imagined scenes of Elysian fields, of a holy city, of a temple with white-robed choirs chanting their chorals or playing orchestra-like on harps, are not derived from the teachings of Jesus. In so far as they are Biblical at all, they are derived from the Book of Revelation. The hope which Jesus put before his disciples was that of a kingdom of God on the earth. For this he bade them pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This he promised to them as the Father's gift: "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The hope of the Hebrew people

The Hebrews were a peculiar people in more respects than one.

They were peculiar in their conception of God; peculiar in their ideas of what was acceptable to him; peculiar in their ethical ideals; peculiar in their expectations. The people of antiquity generally looked backward for their Golden Age; the Hebrews looked

forward; their Golden Age was yet to come. Their prophets told them of a good time coming, a new social order in which the authority of Jehovah would be universally recognized and his just and humane laws would be universally obeyed. There would be no war: the implements of war would be beaten into implements of agriculture. There would be no despotism: law would go out of Zion, the only enforcement needed the religious consciousness of mankind. There would be an equable distribution of property: every man would sit under his own vine and fig-tree. There would be universal education: no man would need to teach his neighbors. There would be no harsh fathers, no heart-breaking, disobedient children: the hearts of the fathers would be turned to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. They foretold a Coming One who would bring in this kingdom of righteousness, peace, and universal welfare. This Coming One was termed in the Hebrew tongue the Messiah, in the Greek tongue the Christ. It is true that sometimes the language of the prophet seems to imply that Israel

was itself the Messiah; but generally he is personified—sometimes as a Leader, sometimes as a Prophet, sometimes as a King, sometimes as a Sufferer, but always as the One who brings in a new era to the nation, and often, through the nation, to the world.

That after the resurrection the "Jesus or Christ" disciples believed that Jesus of

Nazareth was this long-foretold and long-expected Messiah I should have thought unquestionable did not experience demonstrate that erudite theologians are able to question anything. The "Hibbert Journal" has recently published a series of papers entitled "Jesus or Christ," the object of which is to show the different conceptions which different schools of thought attach to the word Christ. Father Tyrrell assures us that "'Christ' now means the Second Person of the Trinity made man." To the Rev. R. Roberts, Christ "means an enriching and expanding ideal." I do not deny the right of disputants to use words in any sense they choose so long as they define the sense in which they use them. My object in these papers is to

interpret words as they were used by the disciples of Jesus in the first century, and it is quite clear that the word Christ was not used by them to mean what either Father Tyrrell or what Mr. Roberts means by it.

When the angel told the shepherds, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," the shepherds neither understood him to mean that "the Second Person of the Trinity made man" was born nor that "an enriching and expanding ideal" was born; they understood him to mean that the promised Messiah was born. When Peter, replying to the question of Jesus, "Whom say ye that I am?" answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he did not mean Thou art "the Second Person of the Trinity made man," nor thou art "an enriching and expanding ideal." He meant, Thou art the promised Messiah. When Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection, on the way to Emmaus, and asked them, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" he did not mean, and they did not understand him to mean,

Ought not "the Second Person of the Trinity made man" to suffer these things and enter into his glory, nor Ought not "an enriching and expanding ideal" to suffer these things and enter into his glory? but, Does not this suffering and this glorification fulfill what the Old Testament prophets had foretold of the Coming Messiah? When Saul, after his conversion, began his ministry in Damascus by proving that this is Christ, he did not prove, or attempt to prove that Jesus is "the Second Person of the Trinity made man," nor that he is "an enriching and expanding ideal;" he attempted to prove that Jesus fulfilled the conditions of ancient prophecy and was the long-expected Messiah.

This was difficult to prove.
Christ's teaching concerning the kingdom of God For the people wanted both meager and immediate results.

They wanted not the redemption of the world, but the redemption of Israel; they wanted their nation to become a world power, as Babylon had been and as Rome was; they wanted Jerusalem to be a world capital and their rulers to be world rulers. When Jesus told

them that the kingdom was for pagans as well as for Jews, they mobbed him. And they wanted this kingdom brought to them, not wrought by them. They had no idea that it would require time and patience and costly endeavor. They looked for it to be brought about by a miraculous divine intervention—a Messiah coming in clouds and power and great glory, and his holy angels with him. Their expectation was like that of Moses at the Red Sea: "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." And they had no liking for the reply of Jesus to this expectation, like the reply of Jehovah to Moses: "Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."

But this was the burden of his teaching. You think, he said, that the kingdom of heaven will come suddenly. No! It will come up like a great tree which grows gradually out of a little seed. You think it will be brought to the earth by a supernatural power. No! It will grow like seed cast into the ground which grows the sower

knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself. You think it will come simply to Israel. No! It will come to any people who will receive it, and to no people who will not receive it. For the hearts of the children of men are like soil, and if the seed falls on good soil it brings forth fruit, and if it falls on stony soil, which does not open to receive it, it brings forth no fruit. You think it will be done *to* you. No! It must be wrought *by* you. It is like an estate left by an absentee landlord to be managed for him. God will often seem to you to be afar off, for he will put the responsibility of bringing about this kingdom upon you. You think it will come with great pomp and glory. No! It will come without observation; it will be here and you will not know it. You think it will be given to you without cost, as a great gift. No! It will be purchased by you at a great sacrifice; like a pearl which, when one has found, he sells all that he has in order to get means wherewith to buy it. You think it will be rapturously welcomed. No! When it is offered to you, you will all, with one consent, excuse

yourself from accepting it. You think of it as something external, bestowed upon you. No! The kingdom of heaven is within you.

It is true that there are occasionally to be found in the reported teachings of Jesus figures and phrases which have been taken by some scholars to indicate that Jesus shared the popular idea of his time respecting the kingdom of God. But it is far more probable that these exceptional teachings are either capable of a different interpretation than that put upon them,¹ or are colored by the reporter's prepossessions, than that they are the uncolored report of the teachings of Jesus, and that the burden of the teachings as reported, which are largely devoted to correcting these misapprehensions, originated with and reflected the prepossessions of the reporters. And it is certain that the burden of his ministry was what I have indicated above: that the kingdom

¹ For example: "This *generation* shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 34. The word here rendered *generation* is equally capable of being rendered *race* or *nation*. See Alford's note on the passage. And the continuance of the Jewish people as a race or nation, without territory, capital, or government would serve to confirm, not to negative, the prophecy here attributed to Jesus

of God is dependent on individual character, and can only grow up gradually as individual character becomes conformed to the character of God.

**Christ's four
great sermons** In his first sermon at Nazareth Jesus depicted the object of his coming: it was to initiate this kingdom; to bring glad tidings to the poor, healing to the broken-hearted, deliverance to the captive, sight to the blind, liberty to the oppressed. In this sermon nothing is said, and nothing implied about a celestial kingdom hereafter. In his second sermon, preached at the time of the ordination of his twelve special helpers, Jesus made it clear that this glad tidings — healing, deliverance, liberty — could come only by the development of character. Happiness cannot be conferred upon mankind, it must be developed in mankind. We are blessed if we are poor in spirit, meek, aspiring, full of mercy, pure in heart, peace-possessing and peace-giving. No mere obedience to law will give us these qualities. No mere doing things for reward will give them to us. We receive them when we are the children of

our Father in heaven, and devote our lives to acquiring these qualities ourselves by our fellowship with him and imparting them to others by our fellowship with them. In the third great sermon, or series of sermons, the parable by the seashore, Jesus traced in a series of pictured symbols the gradual development of this new social order, based on personal character conformed to the character of the Great Father. And in the fourth great sermon, that on the Bread of Life, preached at Capernaum, Jesus declared that the secret of such a character is to be found in an intimate personal companionship with the Father, a spiritual living in him and by him through fellowship with his Son, the world's Messiah.

The great hope which Jesus put before his disciples, and which he puts before us and would have us make the motive of our lives, is the kingdom of God on the earth.

This kingdom of God, as Paul defines it, is a new social order pervaded by the spirit of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: righteousness, or the spirit of

**Paul's definition
of the
kingdom of God**

the Golden Rule, which inspires every man to put himself in his neighbor's place and to treat him as he would wish to be treated if they could change places; peace and good will, or the spirit of co-operation and mutual service, in lieu of that of strife and envying; and joy or universal welfare, founded on the spirit of righteousness and peace; the whole growing out of fellowship with God and participation in his life with him. This is what Jesus meant when he said, Be not divided in your mind, saying "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Jesus never said "Take no thought for the morrow," nor even, Be not anxious about the morrow; he said, Be not divided in your mind; give yourself with singleness of purpose to the service of life, and be content with what life brings you in return, whether it be riches or poverty, praise or blame, reward or persecution.

There is only one thing worth living for:

namely, to make this world better worth living in. Impracticable? Not at all. Practicable; and often practiced. Practiced by Dwight L. Moody, who gave himself to the preaching of Glad Tidings and asked for nothing, but took what was given to him. Practiced by General Armstrong, who gave his life to the education and elevation of an outcast race, and never asked anything for himself, yet did not starve. Practiced by Dr. Grenfell, who sought out a people least known and cared for, that he might know them and care for them.

Nor need one devote himself to a missionary life to realize this ideal. Of all the thousands who heard Jesus preach he called only twelve to leave their business and accept an apostolate. The rest he sent back into their life, inspired with a new understanding of life, a new hope for their fellow-men, a new faith in God. Nor did he merely preach; he fed the hungry, healed the sick, comforted the sorrowing, cheered the discouraged, taught the ignorant, lifted off the burden of the past from the despairing and sent them on their way rejoicing. Every railway

man who helps to bind the country together by iron bands, every manufacturer who helps to make shoes or clothing and distributes them far and wide for the benefit of mankind, every cook in the kitchen who makes the body a better servant and better minister to the spiritual nature, is doing Christ's work. To be a follower of Christ is not to do great things; it is to do all things in a great spirit, the spirit of unselfish service.

**The four
philosophies
of life**

There is a theory that life is wholly evil, that the only escape from it is into a Nirvana of unconscious existence. This is Buddhism, the philosophy of suicide. This was not the teaching of Jesus.

There is a theory that the world is wholly evil; but that for a few there is escape into a future celestial happiness, while for the many there awaits a hopeless doom of oblivion or the still more hopeless doom of endless misery. This is mediævalism, the philosophy of an eternal battle between good and evil. This was not the teaching of Jesus.

There is a philosophy that human nature is essentially good, that the evils of life are due to defective social organization, that if we reform that all will be well. This is Socialism. This was not the teaching of Jesus. He was not a Socialist; he was not even a reformer. He did almost nothing to re-form the forms of social organism, political or individual, of his day.

There is a faith that God is in his world making it better, making out of the common men and women, such as we are, beings worthy to be called the children of the Most High. This was the teaching of Jesus.

To work with the Father in making this world a better world to live in, he taught was the only life worth living. To give one's self wholly and without reserve to such a life he taught was religion. To live soberly is to take all material things which will help such a life and to reject all things which will hinder it. To live righteously is to do unto others as we would have others do unto us, and to love one another as Christ loved us. To live godly is to give our whole life, all that we have and all that we are, to working with

our Father that we may fulfill our Father's will. To be inspired by the great hope is to live in the assurance that at last our Father will accomplish his purpose in bringing about among men a social order of righteousness, peace, and universal welfare founded on fellowship with him. So to live, inspired by this hope and in comradeship with our Father, as to make this world, and each of us our little world, a better and a happier world for our having lived in it—this is the religion of Jesus the Christ.





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The ethical teachings
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